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ABSTRACT

This book is intended to explain principles of qualitative research to potential researchers and to provide them with a set of tools, and guidelines for critical thinking as they carry out such research. The chapters are organized around the elements of the research process which require decisions. Following an introductory chapter, Chapter 2 deals with questions about planning and designing qualitative research. Chapters 3 and 4 explore some of the main methods for generating qualitative data and deal with ontological, epistemological, practical and ethical issues associated with different methods of data set generation. Chapter 3 focuses on qualitative interviewing and Chapter 4 examines the use of observation, documents, and visual data. Chapter 5 discusses issues related to sampling and selection in qualitative research, alternative logic underpinning qualitative sampling and selection. Chapters 6 and 7 explore the analytical process beginning with a discussion of various techniques for sorting, organizing, and indexing qualitative data. Chapter 7 contains a discussion of how qualitative material can be fashioned into convincing social explanations. Chapter 8 concludes with a discussion of the qualitative research practitioner and draws together the material presented in the book to discuss the role of the researcher as a reflective practitioner in the social sciences. (Contains 64 references.) (JLS)

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